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USACE Environmental Operating Principles and Implementation Doctrine

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Agenda

- Environmental Operating Principles
- Intent
- Three Reasons
- Statutory and Army Policy Foundations
- Corporate Impacts
- Principles/Doctrine Overview With Examples
- Next Steps
- Questions

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USACE Environmental Operating Principles

1. Strive to achieve Environmental Sustainability. An environment maintained in a healthy, diverse, and sustainable condition is necessary to support life.
2. Recognize the interdependence of life and the physical environment. Proactively consider environmental consequences of Corps programs and act accordingly in all appropriate circumstances.
3. Seek balance and synergy among human development activities and natural systems by designing economic and environmental solutions that support and reinforce one another.
4. Continue to accept corporate responsibility and accountability under the law for activities and decisions under our control that impact human health and welfare and the continued viability of natural systems.

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USACE Environmental Operating Principles (cont'd):

5. Seek ways and means to assess and mitigate cumulative impacts to the environ-ment; bring systems approaches to the full life cycle of our processes and work.

6. Build and share an integrated scientific, economic & social knowledge base that supports a greater understanding of the environment and impacts of our work.

7. Respect the views of individuals and groups interested in Corps activities; listen to them actively and learn from their perspective in the search to find innovative win-win solutions to the Nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment.

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Environmental Operating Principles

- Our survival depends upon sustained and balanced ecosystems;
- Environmental concerns are an integral part of all USACE missions, decision-making, programs and projects;
- These Principles illuminate ways our missions integrate with environmental laws, values and sound environmental practices.

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Environmental Operating Principles (con't)

- Accompanying doctrine
  - **Provides an elaboration of the principles**
  - **Establishes direction USACE must take to achieve greater synergy between its activities and the environment**
  - **Compels us to evaluate how our activities impact the natural world**

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Intent of EOPs

- Signpost of USACE awareness and commitment to nation's environmental laws
- A roadmap for all USACE functional areas to follow in ensuring that the effects of their activities upon the environment are included in the decision process at the earliest possible juncture

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Intent (con't)

- Why now?
  - **Public and Congressional interest in environment have broadened**
  - **Environmental sciences also have evolved**
  - **Conscious decision to apply environmental thinking and sustainable approach consistently across the board in all programs in balance with economics**

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Intent (con't)

- Consistent with Bush Administration …
  - ***"Environmental protection and economic growth can go on together. It is possible for the two to exist, if we're wise about public policy."***
- Principles help Corps, within the context of its activities, define its role in creating and maintaining conditions under which humans and nature can exist in harmony, i.e., work toward sustainability.

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Three Reasons for Principles

1. To create unity of purpose within the Corps when dealing with environmental issues
2. To reflect a new tone and direction for dialogue on environmental matters
3. To ensure that environmental conservation, preservation and restoration are considered in all Corps activities at same level as economic issues

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Statutory and Army Policy Foundations

Principles are consistent with:

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA);
- Other environmental statutes and environmental provisions of Water Resources Development Acts that govern Corps activities;
- Army's Environmental Strategy of prevention, compliance, restoration and conservation

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Corporate Impacts

- Empower employees to seek innovative solutions and programs that integrate environmental components with traditional activities;
- Create opportunity to assess existing processes and procedures in order to integrate more fully environmental considerations into day-to-day decision-making and long-term planning processes;

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Corporate Impacts (con't)

- Project Management Business Process -- Principles are the "what" we should be doing and PMBP is the "how" we do it;
- R&D products will reflect the principles;
- Include EOPs in evaluation mechanisms and procedures to ensure their integration.

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Principles/Doctrine Overview

- Elaboration of the Principles
- Critical Definitions
- Situational Awareness
- Applicability to USACE Missions/Activities

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Principle #1: Strive to achieve Environmental Sustainability. An environment maintained in a healthy, diverse, and sustainable condition is necessary to support life.

- States the *ultimate* goal of all Environmental Operating Principles -- *to achieve Environmental Sustainability*
- Environmental Sustainability: "a synergistic process whereby environmental and economic considerations are effectively balanced through the life cycle of project planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance to improve the quality of life for present and future generations."

- Sustainable solutions are achieved by linking environmental and economic needs

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Principle #1 Example

- SPiRiT -- Sustainable Project Rating Tool
  - Tool Corps developed to rate sustainability of all military facilities under development -- use required by policy in all phases -- planning through project commissioning
  - Incorporates content of many rating systems and design guides, including LEED Green Building Rating System

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Principle #2: Recognize the interdependence of life and the physical environment. Proactively consider environmental consequences of Corps programs and act accordingly in all appropriate circumstances.

- Stresses awareness of:
  - the effect Corps activities have on the environment
  - our values as citizens
  - our mission as an executive agency of the federal government

- Focus Corps efforts on:
  - optimizing use and conserving of dwindling resources
  - developing environmentally sustainable systems
  - promoting use of techniques that improve environmental sustainability
  - Educating leadership on link between environment and mission execution.

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Principle #2 Example

- Marsh Restoration, Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Texas
  - Galveston District, with state and federal resource agencies, implementing a plan to prevent wave erosion and restore 1,600 marsh acres in Gulf of Intercoastal Waterway
  - Using dredged maintenance material to restore marsh
  - Project will benefit naturally occurring wild flock of endangered whooping cranes wintering in Aransas NWR

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Principle #3: Seek balance and synergy among human development activities and natural systems by designing economic and environmental solutions that support and reinforce one another.

- Develop and execute procedures that will effect *balance* between human activities and the earth's ecosystems
- PMB process to incorporate relevant environmental and economic factors as a routine business practice
- To effectively convey impacts of development activity, evaluation should integrate value of natural resources development with environmental enhancements
- Corps should move beyond traditional success criteria of cost, performance and timeliness to also include use of innovative technologies, materials and designs to lessen stress our activities have on the environment

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Principle #3 Example

- Sonoma Baylands Wetlands Restoration, CA
  - Demonstration project shows Corps expertise in environmental engineering and construction
  - Restored 348 acres of hayfield into tidal salt marsh habitat on San Pablo Bay
  - Used 2 million cubic yards of dredged material from Oakland Harbor to create tidal salt marsh habitat
  - Demonstrates a beneficial use of dredged material while simultaneously providing needed navigation

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Principle #4: ***Continue to accept corporate responsibility and accountability under the law for activities and decisions under our control that impact human health and welf and the continued viability of natural syste***

- Focus on compliance with Nation's environmental laws and mandates in our mission execution

- Apply responsibility and accountability in all aspects of our work and ensure everything we do meets or exceeds legal requirements

- Responsibility and Accountability mean:
  - Understanding importance of achieving sustainability
  - Setting expectations for changes in individual and corporate behavior
  - Setting clear objectives for every project and activity, and
  - Providing sound indicators to report achievements

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Principle #4 Example

- Environmental Compliance at Projects, Labs, Centers and Facilities
  - Environmental Compliance Coordinator Network assures all USACE-operated facilities meet relevant environmental laws/regulations
  - Requires annual assessments of facilities
  - Operations managers responsible/accountable for compliance, correcting deficiencies, reporting results
  - Integrated into day-to-day operations - employees take pride in going beyond required standards

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Principle #5: Seek ways and means to assess and mitigate cumulative impacts to the environment; bring systems approaches to the full life cycle of our processes and work.

- Cumulative impacts - Occur when the effects of an action are added to or interact with other effects in a particular place and within a particular time.
- Consider the full range of consequences of our actions on the environment, in conjunction with the actions of others, and do so early and throughout a project's life cycle
- Collaborate with other government and non-government actors to identify those existing processes that are reliable for analyzing cumulative impacts
- Calls for additional research in building more comprehensive assessment and mitigation tools

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Principle #5 Example

- Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan
  - Firm partnership with state, federal and local interests
  - Striving to balance environment and economics in the long-term
  - Have seen long-term cumulative impacts of development/diversion of water on ecological health
  - Now our goal is to assure a more “natural” water flow to the Everglades and improve water quality

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Principle #6: Build and share an integrated scientific, economic and social knowledge base that supports a greater understanding of the environment and impacts of our work.

- Continually identify our knowledge needs and resources
- Effectively use the specialized environmental expertise we now possess
- Continue to develop the Corps knowledge base by tapping into sources of expertise throughout the federal government, state and local agencies, and the private sector
- Stay abreast of new technologies in our respective disciplines
- Plan for future learning requirements and talent voids
- Harness capabilities of our digital infrastructure to effectively facilitate knowledge acquisition and decision-making

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Principle #6 Example

- Environmental Technologies Research & Development Program
  - Advances understanding of ecological functions, process and responses to human intervention
  - Provide integrating capabilities across functions, promoting sustainability via improved planning, engineering and operations and maintenance practices
  - Examples include integrating watershed concerns with potential economic development for the Chesapeake Bay and the Army Risk Assessment Modeling System

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Principle #7: Respect the views of individuals and groups interested in Corps activities; listen to them actively and learn from their perspective in the search to find innovative win-win solutions to the Nation's problems that also protect and enhance the environment.

- Charges Corps to actively seek involvement of scientists, engineers, experts in academia, the private sector, public interest groups and other authorities in environmental issues and listen to them with objectivity
- Diversity of opinions and ideas provides a fertile ground for innovation
- Regional Listening Sessions conducted in 2000 offered citizens a voice
- Environmental Advisory Board revitalized
- Stresses that collaboration across the federal community is a means to achieve environmentally sustainable solutions

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Principle #7 Example

- Achieving Environmental Sustainable Water Resources Projects
  - Interagency effort of USACE working with federal partners -- Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce/National Marine Fisheries Service and Environmental Protection Agency
  - USACE will host first of several workshops in April/May timeframe
  - Seek to identify demonstration projects/activities/collaborative efforts

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Next Steps

- What The Chief Has done and Will do
  - Share Principles
  - Model them
  - Lead their application at our facilities and in our policies
- His Charge To You
  - Continue the Chain of Command training
  - Think EOP within PMBP
  - Model them
  - Employ them in all your business practices
  - Use tools promoting sustainability

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Questions

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